

inevitably mean higher costs for seniors and restricted choice of physician.

If you were the homeowner, you would say, "Well, wait a minute. Show me the plan on how you're going to fix my home with that wrecking ball."

We in Congress and the seniors of this country should say, "Wait a minute. Show us the plan in terms of how you're going to fix Medicare with that \$270 billion cut."

They have no plan. They have not shown the plan. We deserve no less.

HELP US SOLVE THE MEDICARE CRISIS

(Mr. SOUDER asked for and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, Medicare will be bankrupt in 7 years. No amount of accusations against each other about robbing banks or telling stories is going to solve the problem. We cannot stick our heads in the sand. Medicare will go broke in 7 years. We must work together to solve the problem rather than just spit out rhetoric.

Many of you have a parent or grandparent who is 58 years of age and expecting Medicare benefits when they turn 65. They have worked hard all their lives, paid their taxes, and saved for their retirement. When they reach 65, however, and are getting ready to retire, there will be no Medicare waiting for them.

Mr. Speaker, for 30 years Medicare has enabled the seniors of this country to get the medical attention they need, and now the Democrats seem to want to stand by, yell a lot, but let the program die.

We Republicans will not stand for it. We are working to strengthen and preserve Medicare. I hope my Democrat colleagues will stop the rhetoric and help us solve the Medicare crisis.

DO NOT BREAK OUR 30-YEAR COMMITMENT TO SENIORS

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, this week we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the creation of Medicare, and it is an event that is worth celebrating. Thirty years ago we made a commitment to the Nation's seniors when we said to them, "Never again will you go without health care. Never again will you be forced to squander your life's savings to pay a doctor's bill."

But now Medicare is in danger, real danger. The Republican budget, which cuts \$270 billion from Medicare, would end Medicare as we know it today. Thirty years ago, 93 percent of the Republicans in this body opposed the creation of Medicare, and now Republicans are closing in on a 30-year goal to end what they never wanted in the first place.

In 1965 we made a deal with seniors. We said, "You pay into this trust fund all of your working life and when you are unable to work any longer, we will use that money to pay for your health care costs."

Seniors have kept up their end of the bargain but now Republicans want to back down on our end. Medicare is the real Contract With America and Republicans should not break it.

IF YOU CARE ABOUT SENIORS, SAVE MEDICARE

(Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, as you are well aware, this is the week of the 30th anniversary of Medicare. Republicans are working hard to make sure Medicare is available over the next 30 years. We wish the President was doing the same.

Instead, President Clinton is using the White House's resources and energies, not to mention taxpayers' dollars, to raid seniors' pension funds—not to save Medicare.

By promoting economically targeted investments [ETI's], which take into consideration the investment's benefit to society rather than the financial benefit to the retiree, the Clinton administration is depriving seniors of the most profitable return from their pension fund.

The Labor Department is supposed to protect your pension fund from being raided, not be the raider. And President Clinton is supposed to care about seniors, not shaft them.

THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA IN 1965: MEDICARE

(Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago, we made a contract with the American people, particularly our elderly. We said, if you work hard and pay your Medicare taxes, you will have a guaranteed insurance program for your medical care that will free you from the threat of financial disaster in your retirement years.

The fact that one of the first things the Republicans have done since they took over Congress in January is to launch an assault on the Medicare Program by voting for \$270 billion in Medicare cuts to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy should come as no surprise. The Republicans never wanted Medicare, they never liked it.

Suddenly, 30 years after they tried to block the program, they have come up with a plan for Medicare; a plan that will limit choice of doctors and hospitals, will double premiums, and will mean higher deductibles.

In just 6 months, House Republicans have passed, adopted, proposed, and

drafted significant changes to the Medicare Program. Changes that will effectively take away the security that the Medicare Program represents to our seniors and that a single fact best summarizes: Before Medicare, 1 in 3 elderly Americans lived in poverty. Thirty years later, it is close to 1 in 10.

Can our elderly afford \$1,650 more for premiums to cover their doctor bills? Can the elderly really afford \$1,700 more for the same or less health care in 1 year alone? Will the proposed vouchers cover them against sudden premium increases if they get sick? Is it fair to make older Americans give up their doctors and be forced into managed care? As President Clinton stated yesterday, the answer to every single one of these questions is no. No.

While House Republicans believe they have devised a contract to meet the political whims of the day, Democrats made a commitment with Americans in 1965 when Medicare was enacted. Let me assure you that President Clinton and the Democrats intend to keep that commitment. Our seniors deserve no less.

MEDICARE IS A FAMILY ISSUE

(Mr. OLVER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, Americans celebrate the 30th birthday of Medicare and Americans will celebrate the medical security that Medicare gives to our senior citizens.

I am sure there are people listening who just turned 30 who are thinking: "This doesn't affect me? Why should I care?" I'll tell you why you should care.

When the Republicans cut \$270 billion from Medicare and use most of that to give tax breaks to the wealthiest handful of Americans, those cuts will make Medicare too expensive for many seniors who will have no place to turn for help except to their adult children.

How else will seniors pay a deductible that has doubled, or pay a monthly premium that has doubled, or pay a new copayment for home care? How else will they pay the specialist not covered by the managed care plan they have been forced into?

Young people cannot ignore the Republican attack on Medicare; 30-year-olds, seniors, and everyone in between should remember that Medicare is not just a seniors issue, it is a family issue.

□ 1240

PERMISSION FOR CERTAIN COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit today